Remarks

This amendment follows a telephone conference held with the Examiner on April 12, 2005, in which the cited reference and the changes made in the present amendment were generally discussed.

The specification has been amended on pages 9-11 to correct the reference numbers for the universal access authority (UACC) field 507 and auditing information field 508 so that they correspond to those used in Fig. 5.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that "a subset of users" is specified having a predetermined access authority to the first file system. As further amended, if the user does not have general authority to perform the requested mount operation, it is determined whether the user "is one of the subset of users" having the predetermined access authority, and, if so, the requested mount operation is performed.[1] Apparatus claim 6 and program storage device claim 11 have been similarly amended.

New claim 16, dependent on claim 1, recites more specifically that the specified subset of users is the owner of the file system (page 10, lines 25-26), while new claim 17, also dependent on claim 1, recites that the specified subset of users is the set of users having read access authority to the file system (page 10, lines 26-27). Claims 18-19 and 20-21 are similar to claims 16-17, but depend on claims 6 and 11, respectively.

As amended, claims 1, 6 and 11 and the claims dependent thereon are believed to distinguish patentably over the Lee article ("How to Mount/Unmount For Users", from the May 1997 issue of Linux Gazette) cited by the Examiner. This article describes how, in a Linux system, one can add a user option to the options field for a file system (as stored in /etc/fstab) to permit users other than the superuser to mount the file system. A similar description appears in the Mann
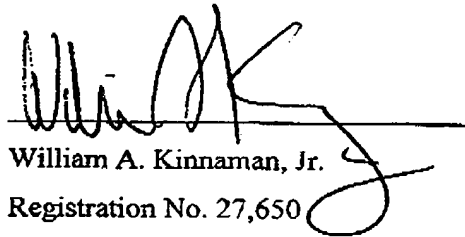
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[1] Claim 1 does not recite that the requested mount operation is performed "only" if the user is one of the subset of users, since in the disclosed system a user not on the access list 506 (Fig. 5) may still have read access authority because the universal access authority 507 has been set to grant read access (page 9, lines 17-20). In such a case, however, the user would not be one of a "subset of users" as claimed by applicant.

reference also cited by the Examiner. However, while this user option permits ordinary users to perform mount operations on the file system in question, it is a binary, all-or-nothing option. That is to say, either <u>all</u> users are permitted to mount the file system (if the **user** option is selected) or <u>no</u> users other than the superuser are permitted to mount the file system (if the **user** option is not selected). There is no mechanism here for specifying a <u>subset</u> of users having a predetermined access authority to the file system as in applicant's claimed invention. As a result, the system of the reference offers a much less flexible means for controlling just which users are allowed to mount a particular file system.

Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. It is hoped that upon the Examiner will hold all claims allowable and pass the case to issue at an early date. Such action is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,
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